



NEWS



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CHP ENCOURAGES TEENS TO 'START SMART' AND STAY SAFE

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – Traffic collisions are the leading cause of death of teenagers across the United States and in California. Each year, thousands of young drivers and their passengers are killed in collisions. According to the California Highway Patrol's (CHP) Statewide Integrated Traffic Records System for 2010, the most recent year for finalized data, there were more than 57,000 drivers between the ages of 16 and 19 involved in collisions in California. A teen driver was determined to be at fault in 67 percent of those collisions.

“The first year behind the wheel for a teen driver can be one of the most dangerous times in their life. Teens are far more likely to be killed in a vehicle collision than in anything else,” said CHP Commissioner Joe Farrow. “Developing safe driving habits is the first step toward avoiding a collision.”

Designed for newly licensed teen drivers and their parents, the CHP offers *Start Smart*, a two-hour driver safety education class that is conducted throughout the state. The free program is an interactive driver safety class for teens and their parents. During the course, officers and speakers illustrate the critical responsibilities of safe driving and collision avoidance techniques. Parents are also reminded of their responsibility to teach their new driver and model good driving behavior.

“Our goal is to have teens and their parents leave the class more aware, better educated, and better prepared,” added Commissioner Farrow. “Our Start Smart program has had a positive impact on thousands of parents and teens in recent years.”

Parents and teenagers can sign up for a *Start Smart* class by contacting their local CHP office. To locate a CHP office near you, visit www.chp.ca.gov.

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